



**National
Foundation for
Infectious
Diseases**

EDUCATION • PREVENTION • RESEARCH

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**NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES COMMENDS THE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES FOR
DESIGNATING NOVEMBER 27 – DECEMBER 3 AS NATIONAL INFLUENZA
VACCINATION WEEK (NIVW)**

November 13, 2006

The National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) strongly supports the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) proclamation of November 27 – December 3 as National Influenza Vaccination Week and urges all Americans to seek vaccination throughout the influenza season (October through March). Annual influenza vaccination is the best way for people to protect themselves and their loved ones from illness due to influenza and its complications.

Increasing awareness of the importance of annual influenza vaccination is key to ensuring everyone is fully protected this year. A recent NFID national consumer study found that many people don't recognize the severity of influenza and the risk of spreading the disease to their loved ones. Alarming, many Americans are also unaware influenza vaccine still provides protection if given in December, January and even later.

“Many people mistakenly believe that if they are not vaccinated before the holidays, they should give up on seeking vaccination. Encouraging the public to seek immunization from their physicians is a terrific way to protect Americans against this serious infectious

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disease,” says William Schaffner, M.D., NFID Vice President & Chairman, Department of Preventive Medicine, Vanderbilt University School of Medicine. “It is increasingly important to remind people to get vaccinated as we move into the influenza season months when people are most likely to become sick.”

Each year, influenza is responsible for more than 200,000 hospitalizations and approximately 36,000 deaths. The nation’s leading health experts recommend anyone who wishes to reduce their risk for influenza infection to be immunized this year. Vaccination is especially important for children 6 months up to 5 years of age, persons aged 50 years and older and those with underlying medical conditions, such as asthma or diabetes, in addition to health care workers and those in contact with high-risk groups.

About the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases

Founded in 1973, the NFID is a non-profit organization dedicated to public and professional educational programs about infectious diseases.

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